

Weekly Report No. 1

January 8-16, 1985

The purpose of the first week of research was to become oriented to some of the repositories, to develop some understanding of the availability and potential of the documentation, and to collect whatever possible during my first trip to the site area. I gave priority to collecting cartographic, chain of title, and census data in order to begin to put together a clearer picture of the changing uses of the property over time.

To date I have spent only about two days gathering materials. I have visited the Maryland Geological Survey and the Enoch Pratt Library in Baltimore, and the Maryland Hall of Records and the Maryland State Law Library in Annapolis. I was unable to visit the Maryland Historical Society offices in Baltimore because it has closed for inventory until February 16. This is unfortunate, since I will be unable to see the Addison family papers until the Society reopens. It also prohibited my obtaining a copy of the 1974 Park Service report, "Oxon Hill Manor: Description, Evaluation, and Recommendations for Use as an Official Residence" by Barry C. Mackintosh. Fortunately, Silas Hurry at the Maryland Geological Survey was able to furnish me with a xeroxed copy of the chain of title research done for the report.

Since I have not had time to analyze the maps, census data, or secondary works collected thus far, I will refrain from impressionistic comments. Instead, I will briefly outline my immediate research plans. I will return to Maryland on January 19

for a stay of about 9-10 days. I have been offered the house of a friend near Upper Marlboro where I can stay during my research forays into Baltimore, Annapolis, and Upper Marlboro. My plans are to complete the acquisition of cartographic materials and census data, and to make some progress toward analysing documentation pertaining to the Oxon Hill site. Two dissertations, Allan Kulikoff's "Tobacco and Slaves: Population, Economy and Society in Eighteenth-Century Prince George's County, Maryland" and Bayly Marks' "Economics and Society in a Staple Plantation System: St. Marys County, Maryland 1790-1840" have been very useful in pointing to those records which will be most valuable and in offering information which helps to establish the historical context of Oxon Hill's evolution. Another promising source will be a 1776 census.

I will also explore a variety of Nineteenth Century sources, such as inventories and tax records, as part of a process of identifying individuals associated with Oxon Hill. From my research so far it is evident that the "Oxon Hill Manor" of 1767 (map in the Hall of Records), containing over 3,000 acres, did not survive as a unit for very long. The estate appears to have been broken up piecemeal, evidenced by the sale of 1,328 acres to Zachariah Berry in 1810 and by other sales later in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries. It also appears that the estate rented substantial parts of its land to tenants, perhaps from its earliest years. Renting was a common practice in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries, but evidence so far only points to tenancy^{at Oxon Hill} for certain in the Nineteenth Century. In the 1878 Hopkins Atlas, for example, T. Baker Dyer, B. Mosher, James E. Bowie, and W.B. Bayne

are all listed as "farmers" at "Oxen Hill." The 1861 Martenet Map shows a "James E. Bowie" as the "occupant" of Oxen Hill. He may have been one of several tenants farming the original lands of Oxon Hill Manor. One of the purposes of my research will be to establish the exact pattern of land tenure at Oxon Hill over time.

During my stay in Maryland I expect to spend some time analyzing data as well as collecting it. I hope to present a much more detailed report on my findings on or about February 8.

Lorne McWatters
Rt 3, Box 576
Pittsboro, N.C. 27312
(919)542-5262

Geographical Names

Oxon (Oxen) Hill
" Hill Manor
" Run
" Creek
" Hundred

Piscataway Creek
" Hundred
" District

Prince Georges County }
Charles County } Potomac
St. Marys County } countries

New Scotland Hundred
Hynson Hundred
King Georges Parish
(aka Piscataway Parish
and St. Johns Parish)

Spalding District
Grimesville
Berrys Point
Rozers (Rosiers) Bluff
Ft. Foote
Broad Creek
Alexandria

St. Elizabeth }
Admariothria } Original
Mt. Nebo } 17C-land
Locust Thicket } grants later
Canton } included in
Oxon Hill Manor

Proper Names

Addison (many)
Berry, Thomas O.
Berry, Zachariah
Bowie, James E.
Bayne, Dr. J.W.
Sheriff, Thomas
Lyons (no first)
Grimes, Thomas
Matingly, G.
Marbury, R.F.
Hungerford, H.A.
Rosier, Frank
Rosier, Charles

Dyer, T. Baker }
Mosher, B. } "Formerly at
Bayne, W.B. Jr. } "Oxon Hill" list
with James
Bowie in
1878 Atlas

Owners of Oxon Hill

Addison, Col. John
Addison, Thomas
Addison, Walter Dulany
Berry, Zachariah
Berry, Thomas O.
Suit, Samuel Taylor
Suit, Rosa P.
Heald, John C.
Coleman, Reuben C.
Rock Creek Land Co.
Coleman, Emma P.
Coleman, R. Lindsay